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# Marxism Reconsidered Should We Go Beyond Marx?

BY

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13. In the previous lecture we considered the crisis in the revolutionary movement. We saw that the crisis is not in the revolutionary movement itself, but in the old revolutionaries who can no longer function on the historic stage. The revolutionary movement is the process through which the revolutionary idea of communism realizes itself. We saw that an idea can realize itself only through a succession of forms. To function in the material world, an idea must assume a material form. But a form can function only for a limited time. When the time passed, the existing form must be destroyed that the idea may assume a new and higher form through which the idea may function in the changed historic conditions. The revolutionary idea of communism, which brought out the Russian revolution, can no longer function. It is now assuming a new form. But the old revolutionaries cannot accept the new form. History is retiring them from the stage of history. This is the crisis for these revolutionaries, and this is what makes them disappointed and drives them to despair. Their confessions are only an admission on their part that they can no longer function. They belong to the past, and history will no longer concern itself about them. The new idea of revolutionary communism will have to function through a new generation of revolutionaries. We saw the reason why the old revolutionaries can no longer function: they had a false idea of history, and we saw that this idea roots deep in Marxism. Marxism was conceived in a false idea of history. Historically this false idea was necessary and inevitable; it served the historic purpose. With a true idea of history the working masses could not be aroused from their age-long sleep and ignorance. But the working masses are no longer asleep and ignorant. Hence the time arrived for the working masses to acquire a true idea of history. History and human knowledge are not a perfect blank; we cannot begin a new chapter in the revolutionary movement, without taking cognizance of what history already accomplished in the realms of thought and action. Hence, before we proceed with the new task before us, we must first reconsider Marxism, to ascertain wherein it was right, and wherein it was wrong; to retain what was right in Marxism, and to reject what was wrong in it.

14. Now, in the course of the past twenty years, we repeatedly reconsidered Marxism, and we repeatedly pointed out what should be rejected and what should be retained. And now we must again repeat this old task. Bergson tells us that repetition is mechanical and pertains to matter. In other words, repetition is not progress. Progress means original and creative work of the spirit. This is the reason why we are bored with repetition, and why we rejoice in the originality of the creative spirit. It would therefore follow that, in taking up our old task of reconsidering Marxism, we stagnate and make no progress. It would therefore seem wiser to leave the past, and start out a new chapter with a new idea, entirely disregarding Marxism and the past. We shall, however, presently see that this itself would be the most mechanical and unprogressive course that we could pursue. First, as I stated, history and human knowledge are not blanks. We cannot continue our historic work, without taking cognizance of what history already accomplished in the realms of thought and action. If we ignore the past, we shall no more be able to make a step in further progress than builders could raise a ten-story building by destroying the foundation. Just as the builders build on the basis of the foundation the first story, and upon the basis of the foundation and the first story they build the second story, and so with the other stories; so we must build the future upon the basis of the past. But to build upon the past rationally, we must first understand the past. To continue the revolutionary work, we must first understand Marxism. Marxism embodies ideas that are of transcendent significance, and we must adequately understand them. On the other hand, Marxism suffers from inadequacies, which we must reject. This requires a reconsideration of Marxism. In our case, this means repetition; to repeat what, for the last twenty years, we have repeatedly done. According to Bergson, this will not be the work of the creative spirit, nothing original and creative will result from this. Now, what Bergson says is true, but it is not the whole truth. We shall presently see that repetition is a condition to the original and creative work of the spirit.

15. First, repetitio est mater studiorum - repetition is the mother of study. To



understand adequately what one studies, he must repeat the subject again and again and the more often he repeats the more adequately he understands the subject. Our progress in knowledge and understanding rests on repetition; if we do not repeat, we cannot advance in the subject, and certainly we cannot advance from one subject to a higher subject. Next, the spirit can be original and creative only in proportion as it rests on mechanical repetition. It is with the freedom of the spirit to create something new, something original, as it is with the freedom of the spirit generally. The spirit is free in proportion as it conforms with necessity. This is the reason why Spinoza defines freedom in terms of necessity. A few illustrations will make it clear. We are free to express our thoughts in any language in proportion as we repeatedly spoke that language and conformed with its nature and its rules. The mechanic is free to manifest his mechanical skill in proportion as he repeatedly used the same tools and performed the same task. The artist on the stage is free to express his artistic talent in proportion as he repeated and memorized the part which he is to perform, sing or play. It is the same with the orator. The orator is free to express his ideas in proportion to the number of times that he expressed these ideas and memorized the form of expression. The philosopher is free to convey his ideas in proportion as he repeatedly reflected on his ideas. And it is so with us. In all these repetitions, the spirit attains to ever greater freedom to bring out something original. In repeating the task which we performed many times before, we shall bring out something original, something creative. Hence we must welcome the necessity that requires the repetition of an old task.

16. The basis of Marxism is the materialist conception of history, and therefore we must begin with it. It is the materialist conception of history, because it rests on the mode of material production. Marx interprets history with relation to the mode of production. According to Marx, the mode of production has a nature, course of evolution and destiny, which are independent of the will and consciousness of men. History is nothing else than a succession of events determined by the evolution of the mode of production. History, human consciousness and the whole social superstructure are only reflexes and manifestations of the evolution of the mode of production. Inherent in the mode of production is the tendency to become integrated and unified. A time will inevitably come, when the mode of production all over the earth will become integrated into one universal mode of production. This will determine that the mode of distribution shall also become universally integrated. When this has been accomplished, universal communism will be established. Thus communism is inevitable, because of the inevitable destiny of the mode of production. What we must at once notice is this: in this conception of history, man plays a passive and subordinate role; while the mode of production plays an active and determining role. Marx totally disregarded man; Marx never concerned himself about the nature, course of evolution and destiny of man, for Marx regarded man as only a reflex of the mode of production! This is the reason why Marx devoted all his works to a study and analysis of the mode of production, and never wrote anything about man himself. Now, opponents of Marxism condemned the materialist conception of history, without perceiving the transcendent truth involved in this conception of history. And, because the opponent never understood this, they never understood history. To be able to judge the merits and demerits of the materialistic conception of history, we must first crystallize an idea of history which shall serve us as a standard by which to judge the materialist conception of history.

17. History is a process of human existence. As shown in the previous lecture and in my other works, the process of history, like any other process in existence is the realization of an idea in the material world. And we saw that this is an idea of God. Whatever be the nature of an idea, inherently it is eternal and infinite. Take the idea of the electric lamp. This idea can realize itself in infinite material lamps, and it can exist forever. Take the acorn. It is an embodiment of an idea. The acorn can realize itself in infinite oak trees and acorns, and it can exist forever. Thus an idea has two aspects: a material, concrete and limited aspect; and an idea, abstract and infinite and eternal aspect. To understand the



nature of an idea, we must see it in its concrete material form; but to understand the eternal and infinite nature of an idea, we must see it in the idea itself. An illustration, which I often used, will make it clear. The nature of a triangle is such that its interior angles are equal to two right angles. Of this we form an idea. How can I convey this idea to others? There is only one way: I must present the triangle in material and concrete form. This I do either on paper or on sand. When I thus presented the concrete triangle, then I can demonstrate that its interior angles are equal to two right angles. Thus I conveyed to others the idea of the nature of the triangle. But what have I accomplished? Nothing of significance. For, suppose that we know that the nature of the triangle which I presented is such that its interior angles are equal to two right angles, what of it? I destroy the piece of paper or rub off the triangle from the sand, and nothing is left. But this was not my purpose: my purpose was something else; my purpose was to reveal the eternal and infinite nature of the idea that manifests itself in the triangle. But this I cannot show by the triangle which I draw on paper or on sand; this I can show in the idea itself. Hence, once I demonstrated that the interior angles of the particular triangle before us are equal to two right angles, I then appeal to the intuition and reason of the people before me, and conclude: Hence, the interior angles of all infinite triangles that existed, exist, and will exist in eternal and infinite existence are equal to two right angles. Only now we have an adequate idea of the triangle. I go a step further and say; in eternal and infinite existence there is but one idea of a triangle, and this one idea manifests itself in eternal and infinite existence in infinite triangles. Only now we attained to an adequate idea of the triangle. I repeat: to perceive the nature of the idea of the triangle, we must see it in a concrete material form; but to perceive the eternal and infinite nature of the idea of the triangle, we must see it in the idea itself. And this is true of all ideas.

18. Have we already reached the highest idea of the triangle? By no means. The triangle enters into the formation of all forms of material realities; it enters into the formation of the square, the circle, the cube, the sphere, the cone, the pyramid, and so on indefinitely. Hence, to perceive the highest idea of the triangle, we must follow up the triangle through all material forms in existence. But even then we shall not yet reach the highest idea of the triangle. The triangle also enters into the form and direction of all movements of material bodies in existence; the movements of stars, planets, comets, as well as light, heat, electricity, and material bodies on earth. And now, suppose we followed up the triangle through all its manifestations in the material world, will we then attain to the highest idea of the triangle? Not yet, for the question then presents itself: Why is the triangle the basis of all material existence? Here we meet a question which the material aspect of the triangle cannot answer. For this purpose we must rise on the wings of intuition, reason and the intellect to perceive the eternal and infinite idea which manifests itself in the material world in material forms. When we do this, we then perceive the following. That the Absolute may manifest himself as the material world, he must first differentiate himself into three aspects: masculine, feminine, and a synthesis of both. Without repeating what I demonstrated in my other works, this must suffice for the present. Hegel familiarized us with this triangle: thesis, anti-thesis, and synthesis. This is only a philosophic expression of the trinity, namely: Father, Mother and Son. The masculine and feminine aspects are the thesis and anti-thesis; but, though opposed to each other and negating each other, yet they attract each other and affirm each other. They unite, and the result is the Son, the synthesis of both. Only now we attained to the highest idea of the triangle. But this idea brings us to the Absolute. Hence, until we reach the Absolute, we cannot have an adequate idea of the triangle or of any other material form of existence.

19. And now we must consider another aspect of the matter. History is more than a triangle. The idea of the triangle is not subject to change, it does not go through a process of history, and it has no destiny. Eternally and infinitely the triangle remains the same. But history is a process of change, of history and death.



any. And, while the idea of the triangle may be adequately understood without the idea of causation, history cannot be understood without the idea of causation. Then we come to causation, we meet the same situation. To form an idea of causation, we must see it in material manifestation; but to understand the eternal and infinite nature of causation, we must see it in the idea itself. Now, philosophers as well as scientists, postulated infinite causes for the infinite effects. But, as I showed in my works on philosophy, this is an illusion. There is but one cause of all infinite effects, and that cause is the Absolute. Hence, just as in the case of the triangle we had to reach the Absolute to understand the triangle; so, also, in the case of causation, we must reach the Absolute to understand causation. In other words, all infinite effects must be related to the Absolute, the one cause of all infinite effects. Only then can we adequately understand history. History is a process of human existence, but this is not an original and independent process. The process of history is bound up with all other processes in existence; and all processes in existence are only realizations in material form of ideas of the Absolute; and all ideas of the Absolute have a purpose and a destiny. Hence, to understand adequately history, we must know and understand the purpose and destiny of all ideas of the Absolute. Since, however, all ideas of the Absolute are only manifestations of one eternal and infinite idea of the Absolute, just as all triangles are only manifestations of one idea of a triangle; it follows that, to understand history, we must know and understand the one eternal and infinite idea of the Absolute, which manifests itself in infinite ideas, and which realize themselves in infinite processes, among which is also the process of human existence. What this eternal and infinite idea of the Absolute I already demonstrated in my works on philosophy. And now that we crystallized an idea of history, let us apply it to the consideration of the materialist conception of history formulated by Marx.

20. The transcendent significance of the materialist conception of history is this: It shows us the material aspect of history. Marx was the first genius that perceived and revealed this aspect of history. For thousands of years, mankind vaguely perceived their destiny and the purpose of existence. And though, Moses, the Prophets and Jesus perceived it clearly, yet inadequately; for they saw this idea in its abstract, ideal form; they did not see it in its concrete material form. The greatness of Marx consisted in just this: He revealed to us the material aspect of the process of history; he showed us how the process of history manifests itself in the successive stages of evolution of the mode of production. Now, that we know this, we can read history backward and forward with absolute certainty. We see with absolute certainty that the mode of production must and will become one integrated mode over the whole earth. We see with the same certainty that the mode of distribution will likewise become integrated into one mode of distribution over the whole earth. And it follows with absolute certainty that communism is inevitable. Only now we can see clearly and adequately that communism is inevitable. Communism implies a human society - a human society that is no longer determined by the mode of production, but rather determines the mode of production. The human society resting on universal communism - this is the kingdom of God on earth, of which Moses, the Prophets and Jesus spoke. This is the great achievement of Marx. But this does not yet give us an adequate idea of history. Marx accomplished only the first step; he accomplished only that which I accomplished by showing the interior angles of the particular triangle which I drew on paper or on sand are equal to two right angles. But we saw that this did not yet reveal the eternal and infinite nature of the idea of the triangle. Here is where the inadequacy of the materialist conception of history manifests itself. Let us examine the matter closely.

21. Marx speaks a finite and temporary language. Marx begins in the middle of the story, and ends in the middle of the story. He begins with men already found producing things. What preceded that moment; how men came to begin to produce things; how men came into existence; how the material world came into existence - of all this Marx had no idea. Hence, prior to the time that men are found produc-



ing things, an eternity passed, of which Marx had no idea. Thus Marx began in the middle of the story. Again, Marx saw only as far as the realization of the human society upon the basis of universal communism; but what will follow, what state of development mankind will attain, what is their own destiny - all this Marx did not see. Hence, his idea of history ends in the middle of the story. It is therefore an inadequate idea of history. Next, we come to the idea of causation. We saw that in history are involved purpose and destiny. Who determined the purpose and destiny of history? Marx tells us that the mode of production determines human consciousness and the whole social superstructure. How did Marx come to this view? He saw that between the successive stages of development of the mode of production and the successive forms of human consciousness, their beliefs and ideas, there is a correspondence; and he concluded that this correspondence is determined by the mode of production. The mode of production, therefore, is an original and independent process, while human consciousness and its successive forms are but a reflex of the mode of production and dependent upon it. Marx reached this conclusion, because he saw that the mode of production is not affected by the will and consciousness of men; he also saw that men cannot have any effect upon the mode of production; he therefore concluded that the mode of production determines the will and consciousness of men. And here is where Marx stopped. He did not go a step further and ask the question: and who or what determines the nature, course of evolution and destiny of the mode of production? Suppose Marx did not stop here; suppose he went further and deeper into the subject; suppose he reached the conclusion that the nature, course of evolution and destiny of the mode of production are determined by the Absolute; in that case, the mode of production is no longer determining history and the will and consciousness of men. What, then, becomes of the materialist conception of history? History is to be understood <sup>not</sup> with relation to the mode of production, but with relation to the Absolute. Therefore the materialist conception of history no longer explains history.

22. What, then, is the truth? This is the truth: men do not determine the nature, course and destiny of the mode of production and history. This is what the materialist conception tells us, and this is absolutely true. But, likewise, it is true: the mode of production does not determine the will and consciousness of men, and it does not determine the course and destiny of history. Here is where the materialist conception is false. But how can we explain the correspondence between the successive stages of the mode of production and the successive stages in human consciousness, ideas, beliefs, institutions, and forms of social life? This is the answer. We saw before that the nature, course and destiny of the mode of production must be referred to the Absolute as the cause; and now we must go a step further and say that the nature, course of evolution and destiny of mankind must be referred to the Absolute. The Absolute is the cause of both, and therefore there is a correspondence between them. This was already demonstrated by Spinoza, and he formulated the proposition as follows: The order and connexion of ideas is the same as the order and connexion of things. Both aspects of history proceeding from the Absolute, and determined by the Absolute, correspond with each other. But Marx saw only the one-sided and limited material aspect, and he entirely ignored the other, the human aspect, and this one-sidedness led him to serious errors, as we shall presently see. The materialist conception of history is the basis of Marxism. Next to this conception, and directly based upon it, is Marx's conception of value which is the basis of his whole economic philosophy. Hence, the next step is to consider Marx's theory of value. Here, again, we shall find the same situation. Marx perceived an eternal and infinite truth, yet inadequately and one-sidedly. Let us then, examine Marx's theory of value.

23. What determines the value of a commodity? Why, for instance, do we exchange twenty yards of linen for one coat; why do we pay eight dollars for a pair of shoes, fifty dollars for a suit of clothes, and five thousand dollars for a house? The answer is: the value of a commodity is determined by the amount of labor socially necessary to produce and reproduce a commodity. If the twenty yards of linen require the same amount of socially necessary labor to produce them as one coat



coat requires, then the twenty yards of linen are an equivalent of the one coat, and they will be exchanged for one another. Again, if the production of a pair of shoes requires the same amount of socially necessary labor to produce them as eight dollars' worth of gold or silver require, then eight dollars are an equivalent for the pair of shoes, and the shoes will cost eight dollars. This is true of all infinite commodities. And now the question arises: what determines the amount of socially necessary labor to produce a commodity? The answer is: the technical development of the mode of production. For instance, in primitive times, with primitive tools and primitive processes of production, the primitive worker could produce in one day a certain commodity. Then that commodity represented a day's socially necessary labor. But now, the modern worker, with modern machinery and modern processes of production, can produce a hundred or a thousand such commodities in a day. Therefore, now such commodity represents only a fraction of an hour's labor. From this follows that labor which is no longer socially necessary, or labor carried on in a manner no longer socially necessary, does not count: it is useless labor. If, for instance, one would work now with primitive tools and in primitive manner to produce a commodity; and, if it required him a day's labor to produce it, while with the modern machinery and the modern methods the commodity can be produced in five minutes; this day's labor represents only five minutes socially necessary labor. From this further follows that any one who busies himself about commodities, without adding any necessary labor to the commodity, performs useless labor, and he is not entitled to any equivalent. Then Marx proceeds to show that only the actual producers create value, and only they are entitled to share in the distribution of their commodities. Suppose we consider this country. In this country there may not be more than forty million actual producers. Assuming that every actual producer has to support a wife and children, who do not contribute anything by way of production, we may then say that in this country there must be at least one-third of the population that do not add any value to the products produced in this country. This one-third of the population comprehends the landlords, the bankers, the insurance companies, the manufacturers, the wholesalers, the retailers, the go-betweens, the lawyers, the judges, the jailers, the criminals, the clerks, the prostitutes, the police, the army, the navy, the spies, gougers, swindlers, speculators, and so on and so on. All these live on the surplus-value created by the actual producers, but for which they do not receive any equivalent. Hence, the conclusion drawn by Marx was this: Abolish the capitalist system and do away with the whole class of parasites, then the workers will not have to work so hard and long as they have to work now, and they will enjoy a greater abundance of the means of life.

24. What must be noticed at the outset is this: the whole theory of value and surplus-value, capitalism, and the abolition of capitalism, rests on the material aspect of the mode of production: the human aspect is entirely ignored. This was in harmony with Marx's materialist conception of history. And we meet here the same situation. What Marx perceived is of transcendent significance: it is the recognition of the eternal and infinite law of equivalents on which eternal and infinite existence rests. But his disregard of the human aspect led Marx to serious errors, for which the revolutionaries now pay a terrible penalty. Let us, therefore, reconsider the matter. We saw that the value of a commodity is determined by the amount of labor socially necessary for its production and its reproduction. And we saw that the socially necessary labor is determined by the technical development of the mode of production: the human aspect is entirely ignored. And now let us assume the following case. I am a shoemaker. It takes me one day's labor to make a pair of shoes. Assuming that a day's labor is equal to two dollars. This means that I am to be paid two dollars for making the pair of shoes. And now let us assume a most idiotic case - and we must assume an idiotic case for the reason which will presently appear. Assume that I and the people are so constituted that I cannot as will not make the pair of shoes, and no one will employ me to make a pair of shoes, unless I spend one day on the making of the pair of shoes, and then I spend another day in praying. Now, my praying does not add any value to the shoes; my praying has absolutely nothing to do with the shoes. Yet, since I and the people are so



constituted that the shoes cannot come into existence, unless I spend an additional day praying, the day spent in praying is part of the socially necessary labor. Since a day represents two dollars, I must be paid two dollars for the actual making of the shoes, and two dollars for the praying. Thus the shoes will cost four dollars. And now, let us go a step further in this idiotic case. Suppose that I and the people are so constituted that I cannot and will not make the shoes, and no one will employ me to make the shoes, unless, while I am making the shoes and praying, another man goes around my shop and sings halleluiahs. Now, the two days spent by that man in walking around my shop and singing do not add any value to the shoes; they have absolutely nothing to do with the shoes; yet, since the shoes cannot come into existence otherwise, that man's two days walking and singing constitute part of the socially necessary labor. Since two days are represented by four dollars, that man must be paid four dollars. The pair of shoes will then cost eight dollars: the pair of shoes will represent eight dollars' worth of socially necessary labor.

25. Now, it will be said: this is an idiotic and impossible case: it never existed and it will never exist, and that I had no right to resort to such an idiotic illustration. Now, it is true that this is an idiotic case, yet it is the case that always universally existed and still universally exists, and will yet exist for a long time to come. Marx himself showed that this idiotic case is universal. I need not repeat, what has already been repeated an infinite number of times to show that the capitalist system is absolutely this idiotic case. Why do we maintain such a vast army of parasites and vampires? Why do we maintain in comfort, luxury and extravagance millions of landlords, bankers, manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers, go-betweens, gougers, usurers, swindlers, criminals, prostitutes, lawyers, judges, jailers, spies, detectives, police, army, navy, and so on and so on? Is not the present system absolutely the idiotic case that I assumed? We maintain this idiotic system, because at present it is socially necessary. The working class is not yet ready, able and willing to take in hand the land and the means and the processes of production, and dispense with the present idiotic system. It is an idiotic system, yet at the present it is socially necessary. The workers will not, of their own accord, produce anything, unless some capitalist, some exploiter, some cheat initiates the process of production, supervises it, and takes away the lion's share of the products. This gives us a true idea of what constitutes socially necessary labor. Not only the technical development of the mode of production, but also the development of the human race, and especially the development of the working class. Here we see the inadequacy of Marx's theory of value; his disregard of the human aspects brought bitter disappointment to his followers.

26. It will be said: this is true only of the capitalist countries, where capitalism is established. Well, let us see what is the situation in Soviet Russia. In Soviet Russia they abolished the capitalist class and all of the old parasites, have they freed themselves from the parasites? Instead of the old parasites, they brought out new parasites that are even worse than the old parasites. In Soviet Russia they have a parasite class just as numerous, proportionately to the population, as there is in any capitalist country. Why do they maintain such a vast army such a powerful navy, such an air fleet? Why do they maintain a hierarchy of officials that amount to millions? Why do they maintain such a vast army of spies, detectives and executioners? Why does the vampire state suck out the life and blood of the workers in Soviet Russia? Does the worker in Soviet Russia get out a larger share of his products than the laborer in this country? If we are to judge by the real returns in the form of food, clothing and shelter, then the worker in this country gets back for his labor at least three times as much as the worker in Soviet Russia gets. The workers in Russia are exploited far more than the workers in this country are exploited. Why this exploitation in Soviet Russia? Why the absolute dictatorship over the workers by a class of parasites? Because the workers in Soviet Russia, no more than in any other country, are able to dispense with the army of exploiters and oppressors. It will be said, this is only for the present, because Soviet Russia is surrounded by enemies that seek to destroy it. Suppose



this be granted, are not the other countries similarly surrounded by enemies that seek their destruction? Is not Soviet Russia itself an enemy of the capitalist countries? Does not Soviet Russia employ tens of thousands of spies and so-called communists for the purposes of undermining the foundation of the other countries? Did Soviet Russia have to maintain a vast army, navy and air fleet to defend itself against Poland, Latvia, Estonia, and Finland? But, whatever may be said in excuse of Soviet Russia, the fact remains that in Soviet Russia they have not yet abolished exploitation and the parasite class. In other words, in Soviet Russia, as in all other countries, the socially necessary labor includes the parasite and vampire class. Since they are socially necessary, whatever they do constitutes part of the socially necessary labor, and they are entitled to share in the products produced by the actual producers. It is an idiotic system, but socially necessary, since mankind are yet idiots. A theory of value that disregards the human aspect is inadequate and therefore false, and this the revolutionaries pay a terrible penalty. The whole crisis of the revolutionaries is due to this false theory. Misled by this false theory of value, as by the materialist conception of history, the revolutionaries naively believed that they could dispense with the parasite class, only to bring out a still worse parasite class; and, instead of socialism and democracy, they have state capitalism and fascism. The old revolutionaries were and are disappointed, but they never suspected that inherent in Marxism were already the germs that matured in the Soviet Russia as it now is. And now we must consider another aspect of Marxism.

27. Marx believed that capitalism will be destroyed by its inherent contradictions, and that socialism would follow immediately, and all this transformation would be accomplished within a comparatively short time. He expected that by this time socialism would already be established in the most advanced countries. Here, again, we meet the same situation. It is absolutely certain that capitalism will disappear, and that socialism will take its place; but the question is: How Soon? Marx never concerned himself about the time, for he had no time-consciousness. This was due to his one-sided materialist conception of history. Viewing the process from the aspect of the mode of production, the social transformation from capitalism into socialism could be accomplished within a short time. The mode of production has already reached a state of development fit for the state of socialism. The mode of production has already become international and universal. Even in wars and revolutions the international character of the mode of production asserts itself. For instance, France and Germany are now at war with each other, yet this does not prevent these countries from interchanging the raw materials and products that they need. Hence, viewing the impending social transformation from the aspect of the mode of production, the realization of socialism could be accomplished in a few decades. But, when we view this social transformation from the human aspect, we see that socialism is yet far distant from us. Socialism will only then be realized, when the working class of the most advanced countries will be ready, able and willing to take in hand the mechanism of production, the land and the means of production and distribution, and organize them upon an international basis and carry them on in a rational and just manner; but this will require centuries, if not thousands of years, to be realized. In 1917, Lenin and Trotsky wrongly believed that in a few years they would establish socialism, at least in Soviet Russia. Lenin already formulated a plan for the abolition of money. But, alas, what bitter disappointment was in store for them! This was inevitable. Disregarding the human aspect of the impending social transformation, they overlooked the most important aspect. The mode of production is already fit for socialism, but mankind will not become fit for socialism for centuries to come. History repeats itself. Nearly two thousand years ago, Jesus came and announced: the Kingdom of God is near at hand. Eighteen centuries afterwards, Marx came and announced: the kingdom of socialism-communism is near at hand. Neither Jesus nor Marx reckoned with the time-element. What was the result? After nineteen centuries of Christianity, the kingdom of God seems to be still further from us than it appeared to the followers of Jesus nineteen centuries ago. And the same is true of the followers of Marx. The kingdom of socialism-communism seems to be far more distant from us



than it appeared fifty years ago to the followers of Marx. A blade of grass matures within a few weeks, but an oak tree requires so many centuries to mature. A superficial and trifling reformation in society can be accomplished within a few years; but so fundamental a social transformation as is contemplated by Marxism must require centuries, if not thousands of years. But this illusion was historically necessary. Both Jesus and Marx had to appeal to the masses, who were only ignorant infants. Infants have no conception of time; the reward must be given at once. Have faith in Jesus, and you will at once enjoy the kingdom of God; accept Marxism, and you will at once enjoy socialism. But the time has already arrived for speaking to the masses the truth; they must be taught to realize the time-element, and be prepared to work for centuries to realize the kingdom of God on earth.

28. There is another aspect of Marxism which we must reconsider. We saw that communism is an old ideal, but prior to Marx it was a communism of consumption. We saw in the previous lecture that communism of consumption is primitive and crude, and it will never solve the social problems. It was a great achievement of Marx to have brought this profound truth to light. We saw that the mode of production inevitably tends to become one universally integrated mode of production, which will determine that the mode of distribution shall also become universally integrated, and thus communism is inevitable. Since this communism will be brought out by the mode of production, it necessarily must be a communism of production. Communism of production presupposes a human society in which every member is ready, able and willing to work, and principally to work by hand. Thus labor will be raised to the highest dignity, and become a condition to life, progress and happiness. Even the intellectual specialist will be required to do manual labor, and he will cheerfully work by hand as well as by brain. Since the communism of production is organically bound up with the mode of production, and since the mode of production is organically bound up with the working class, it follows that it is the historic function of the working class to cooperate with the mode of production to bring out communism. But, while Marx thus perceived a profound and infinitely significant truth, he saw this truth one-sidedly, and this was due to his materialist conception of history. Marx saw the working class to consist of workers only; he did not see that, besides being workers, they were also human beings, though degraded human beings. As human beings, they had their aims, purposes and ambitions which transcended their position as mere workers or proletarians. Degraded as a worker may be, he yet cherished the same aims, ambitions and hopes that all other human beings cherish. The worker works, not from choice, not because he regards work a condition to life, progress and happiness, but he works because he must work. Once the necessity for work is removed, and the worker quickly becomes a shirker; and, when the opportunity favors him, he becomes even exploiter and oppressor. Since even the workers have not yet attained to the perception that work - especially physical work - is absolutely essential to the existence, progress and happiness of mankind, what can be expected from the rest of mankind? The transformation of society into socialism-communism presupposes the transformation of human nature. Can this transformation be accomplished as readily as the transformation of the mode of production? But Marx disregarded this aspect of the problem.

29. This one-sided view of history gave birth to the theory of the class struggle. The whole past history was but a history of classes and class struggles. That ever was the nature of any struggle, it was only a disguised form of the class struggle. According to Marx, it is the historic function of the working class to destroy all other classes and also itself as a class, and thus a human society will come in which there will no longer be classes and class struggles. This, too, is a profound truth, but Marx perceived it one-sidedly. Marx taught that the working class has no country, it has no religion, it has no cultural, political or historic relation to the other classes. Now, all this is true of the workers as workers; but the workers, besides being workers, are also human beings, and as such they are bound up with their country, with the people of their country, with the members of their religion, their culture, their political form, and their historic traditions. When a struggle arises between one country and another country,



the capitalists of one country and the capitalists of another country, one religion and another religion, one political form and another political form, the workers will identify themselves with their country, with their capitalists, with their religion, with their culture, with their political form, and with their historic traditions. This, however, Marx and his followers overlooked, and for this they paid a terrible penalty. When in 1914 the World War broke out, over night, the class-conscious socialists became patriots and nationalists, and struggled against their own socialist comrades of other countries. Of course, the Lenins and the Trotskys blamed the socialist patriots. The Lenins and the Trotskys should have blamed themselves, they should have blamed their naive illusions about the working class. It was this inadequate view of the working class that called out as a reaction against it the insane patriotism and nationalism that manifested itself in fascism and nazism. Even in Soviet Russia, the so-called communists are patriots and insane nationalists. Yes, Soviet Russia is the fatherland of all workers in the world, but it is Soviet Russia that is the fatherland. The same is the case with Nazi Germany. Nazi Germany is the fatherland of all Germans, but it is Nazi Germany that is the fatherland. Action and reaction are equal and opposite in direction. The Marxists sinned in their one-sided view, and the reaction sinned in the opposite view. Is any one to be blamed for this? The answer is: No; it was historically inevitable, and we must recognize this historic inevitability. At the same time, we must not be discouraged. Just as the one-sided Marxism called forth a reaction, so the one-sided reaction will call forth a reaction which will restore Marxism; but the restored Marxism will be purged of its one-sidedness and inadequacies. It is therefore clear that the revolutionary movement cannot continue its historic function with the Marxism which we inherited, and which suffers from one-sidedness and inadequacies. The task before us is to single out the eternal truths in Marxism, and to reject what is inadequate and no longer true. It is a difficult task, but it must be performed. This we must do, first, because we are revolutionaries; secondly, because we want to continue to function on the historic stage. We do not want to suffer the bankruptcy of the revolutionaries, who have been retired by history into the limbo of the past. Upon the basis of what is eternally true in Marxism, we must build higher. In other words, we must go beyond Marx. What this means, and how it can be accomplished, we shall see in the next lecture.